

Mr. Speaker, it is my expectation that a thorough and internationally validated investigation will uncover many facts about the assassination of Lebanon's former Prime Minister who remained a sitting member of parliament. Rafik Hariri was the leader of a political faction that many thought would take back control of Lebanon's government in parliamentary elections scheduled to take place in May. I know, from my personal meetings with Prime Minister Hariri, that he held deep reservations and misgivings about the continued presence of Syrian troops and Syrian secret police in Lebanon. Most often, it was not what he said, but what he indicated he could not talk about that most starkly expressed the reservations he had about Syria's role in Lebanon.

Following this national tragedy, Lebanon must now try to hold free and fair parliamentary elections in May. It is my fear that the assassination of Mr. Hariri, and the many other past assassinations that have too often gone without significant investigation in Lebanon, will have a chilling effect on freedom of speech and those who would vocally criticize the continued Syrian presence.

To say it plainly, it is time for Syrian troops and all the Syrian secret police to leave Lebanon. The security that Syria once provided is no longer needed and having security only for those who ally themselves with the continued Syrian presence is incompatible with democracy in Lebanon.

Mr. Speaker, I support UN Resolution 1559 that demands a, "strict respect of the sovereignty, territorial integrity, unity, and political independence of Lebanon under the sole and exclusive authority of the Government of Lebanon throughout Lebanon," and for all, "foreign forces to withdraw from Lebanon."

Rafik Hariri fought for a democratic and prosperous Lebanon. The United States, even after his death, should continue to press for Prime Minister Hariri's vision for Lebanon and a better Middle East.

Mr. PAUL. Mr. Speaker, I join my colleagues in expressing condolences to the family of Mr. Hariri, the families of others killed in the attack that took Mr. Hariri's life, and the people of Lebanon. While I support this legislation expressing sorrow over the murders, I do have some concerns that H. Res. 91 is being waved as a red flag to call for more U.S. intervention in the Middle East.

It is unfortunate that tragic occurrences like these are all too often used by those who wish to push a particular foreign policy. We don't really know who killed Mr. Hariri. Maybe an agent of the Syrian government killed him. Then again any of several other governments or groups in the Middle East or even beyond could be responsible. But already we are hearing from those who want to use this murder to justify tightening sanctions against Syria, forcing Syrian troops to leave Lebanon immediately, or even imposing U.S. military intervention against Syria. Just yesterday we heard that the U.S. ambassador to Syria has been withdrawn.

The problem is that these calls for U.S. intervention ignore the complexities of Lebanon's tragic recent history, and its slow return from the chaos of the civil war—a revival in which Mr. Hariri played a praiseworthy role. We should remember, however, that it was the

Lebanese government itself that requested assistance from Syria in 1976, to help keep order in the face of a civil war where Maronite Christians battled against Sunnis and Druze. This civil war dragged on until a peace treaty was agreed to in 1989. The peace was maintained by the Syrian presence in Lebanon. So, while foreign occupation of any country against that country's will is to be condemned, it is not entirely clear that this is the case with Syrian involvement in Lebanon. Hariri himself was not a supporter of immediate Syrian withdrawal from Lebanon. What most won't say here is that Syria has indeed been slowly withdrawing forces from Lebanon. Who is to say that this is not the best approach to avoid a return to civil war? Yet, many are convinced that we must immediately blame Syria for this attack and we must "do something" to avenge something that has nothing whatsoever to do with the United States.

So, while I do wish to express my sympathy over the tragic death of Rafik Hariri, I hope that my colleagues would refrain from using this tragedy to push policies of more U.S. interventionism in the Middle East.

Mr. KOLBE. Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay homage and tribute to Rafik Hariri, the former Prime Minister of Lebanon who was brutally assassinated and just recently laid to rest. Yesterday, the House of Representatives passed House Resolution 91 recognizing and celebrating his life of dedicated public service. His public as well as private contributions to his country were enormous. I commend all the members of Congress who worked quickly to develop this resolution, particularly members such as Mr. LAHOOD and Mr. ISSA. I am sure the people of the United States and the people of Lebanon will miss Mr. Hariri greatly. Yet again, the Middle East has incurred a tragic loss of a world class leader who stood for peace and a better way of life for all the people of Lebanon. As we ask questions about his death and pursue the perpetrators of this act of terror, let us forever be inspired by how he led his life and made this world a better place.

Ms. BORDALLO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to join my colleagues and our Nation in honoring the life and legacy of former Lebanese Prime Minister Rafik Hariri and to express our condolences to his family and the people of Lebanon.

A true patriot and dedicated public servant, Prime Minister Hariri devoted his life to his country and his people, working to rebuild Lebanon after its civil war and contributing millions to programs to improve the lives of the Lebanese people.

He was well-respected by the international community for his efforts to build a free and independent Lebanon as evidenced by the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1559 affirming the right of the people of Lebanon to choose their leaders free from intimidation, terror and foreign occupation. Sadly he will not see his hope realized.

On behalf of the people of Guam, I extend our deepest sympathy to the families of the victims of the February 14th attack.

Mr. ISSA. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. REHBERG). The question is on the mo-

tion offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. ISSA) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 91, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds of those present have voted in the affirmative.

Mr. ISSA. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

A message in writing from the President of the United States was communicated to the House by Ms. Wanda Evans, one of his secretaries.

PROVIDING FOR AN ADJOURNMENT OR RECESS OF THE TWO HOUSES

Mr. POE. Mr. Speaker, I offer a privileged concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 66) and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the concurrent resolution, as follows:

H. CON. RES. 66

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring). That when the House adjourns on the legislative day of Thursday, February 17, 2005, on a motion offered pursuant to this concurrent resolution by its Majority Leader or his designee, it stand adjourned until 2 p.m. on Tuesday, March 1, 2005, or until the time of any reassembly pursuant to section 2 of this concurrent resolution, whichever occurs first; and that when the Senate recesses or adjourns on Thursday, February 17, 2005, or Friday, February 18, 2005, on a motion offered pursuant to this concurrent resolution by its Majority Leader or his designee, it stand recessed or adjourned until noon on Monday, February 28, 2005, or at such other time on that day as may be specified by its Majority Leader or his designee in the motion to recess or adjourn, or until the time of any reassembly pursuant to section 2 of this concurrent resolution, whichever occurs first.

SEC. 2. The Speaker of the House and the Majority Leader of the Senate, or their respective designees, acting jointly after consultation with the Minority Leader of the House and the Minority Leader of the Senate, shall notify the Members of the House and the Senate, respectively, to reassemble at such place and time as they may designate whenever, in their opinion, the public interest shall warrant it.

The concurrent resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

ELECTION OF MEMBER TO COMMITTEE ON RESOURCES

Mr. POE. Mr. Speaker, I offer a resolution (H. Res. 112) and ask unanimous